2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Schooner lacked the mental acumen of Joshua and Jim, but he revealed himself as a tribal patriarch, proud of his family's history and eager to assist his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, but feeling himself lost and helpless in the struggle before them. With sadness, but without bitterness, he used to speak of the approaching end of Bella Coola culture, and his words brought home the tragedy which the spread of civilization brings to so many, and the responsibility resting upon the white people as a whole.

Until an intelligence test is devised to correlate the mental ability of the white man with that of the native, it is impossible to compare the two scientifically. None the less, the writer deliberately expresses the opinion that Joshua Moody and Jim Pollard are two of the most brilliant men he has met in any walk of life. They are undoubtedly the most able of the Bella Coola; others have only slightly less ability, while the mass of the population compares favourably with an average white community. Their ability, however, is definitely conditioned by their conservatism. Absolute trust in the traditions of their ancestors has checked speculation, as the established explanation is never questioned; new inventions, unauthorized by custom, have been regarded as almost sacrilegious; the force of public opinion, while valuable as a deterrent to anti-social practices, has effectively restrained innovations. The Bella Coola are a good example of a community where development has been atrophied by extreme conservatism fostered by religious beliefs.

Taking into account the material obstacles, the achievements of these people have not been insignificant. In former times, provided only with tools of stone and untempered copper, they built graceful canoes, made watertight boxes, hewed planks from mighty cedars, and erected large houses which called for considerable engineering skill. Judged by white standards, their carving and painting lacked artistic delicacy, but it required no mean ability to portray crest designs to meet their own standards. Passing from the purely mechanical

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

to the aesthetic, their skill in dancing and dramatics is noteworthy: no one who has witnessed a native dance can fail to have been impressed by the performance of the participants and the stage-craft of the carpenters. The fact that no system of writing had ever been devised has prevented the establishment of a native literature, but the practice of passing down an extensive folklore by word of mouth shows their narrative powers as well as their faculty for remembering details. At present it is difficult to appreciate what must have been their energy in earlier times when they faced the struggle for existence, armed with stone tools. Abundant salmon gave them adequate food, but only when weirs had been built with great labour. Though game was plentiful, the hunter was equipped with nothing more formidable than a bow and arrow. The simplest task required patience and skill undreamed of by the average white man. If the reader will allow his imagination to carry him backwards two hundred years, he will realize that the mere provision of food and clothing necessitated constant effort and ceaseless exertion.

Hand in hand with many admirable characteristics, the Bella Coola display others which strike the white man as unprepossessing. A first impression is the untidiness of their houses. Exteriorly, they are often fairly neat, but confusion reigns within. Clothing, instead of being hung up, is left lying on the floor; bed-covtrings are piled carelessly; dirty dishes cover the tables; dogs and children swarm over the floor; flies abound; all is dirty and slovenly. The house itself may be uncompleted; a window lacks glass and has been boarded up; the roof leaks, or the steps are falling down. Nor are the surroundings more attractive. There is one struggling flower-bed in the village, but elsewhere the houses are surrounded by wastes of mud where horses and cattle wander, dogs prowl, and children play. In the distance the mountain peaks rise in splendour, but near at hand all is squalid and unkempt.

They are only slightly more particular about their personal appearance. Dirt does not distress them. They wash occa-

Z:\McGilvray\th. E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NEA Bella Coola NEA

group. The moral code is not concerned with animals. The life of the Bella Coola would be unbearable to most white people, yet they find it far from unpleasant. They sigh at present conditions, but there is much to amuse them notwithstanding. If several people are talking together, one is sure to hear bursts of laughter every few minutes. It takes little to interest them; a story they have heard a hundred times, the troubles of a neighbour with his wife, the eccentricity of a white man, the stupidity of the investigator, any of these is enough to cause a hearty laugh. When collecting information, it was constantly necessary to joke with them; the most facetious witticism was enough, but they lost interest in the work unless kept smiling. Their sense of humour is not refined; jests about sexual matters are common and are enjoyed alike by men, women, and children. It is not that their tastes are perverted, but rather that they have no reticence in discussing this topic, so they find it easy to see the ludicrous aspects of a subject which is ever near the surface in their minds. They have no hesitation in poking fun at their friends; a successful practical joke, such as hiding the writer's tobacco, is enough to fill them with amusement. If the victim shows temporary resentment, the glee of his friends is complete, and shrieks of laughter usually terminate the trick.

Unless the white man who comes to live among the Bella Coola is unusually broad-minded, he is at first repelled by the dirt and unrefinement prevailing everywhere; even the people themselves seem unnatural. He finds it difficult to realize the sincerity of their religious beliefs, and the manner in which these influence their daily lives is hard to grasp. The potlatch system appears so grotesque that it seems to reflect a psychology diametrically opposed to his own. The force of public opinion on personal conduct is almost incomprehensible. Gradually, however, he begins to understand the reasons underlying Bella Coola life. The potlatch becomes intelligible when regarded as a means of achieving fame; constant attention to supernatural beings is natural considering the firm conviction

G. McIlwraith E-9 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

of their environment; the guiding force of public opinion is seen as a check on individual license, fostered or inculcated by the ties which hold together extended families and make it impossible for a man to lead an isolated life where others will not be affected by his actions. If the white man is willing to receive new ideas, he will learn much from the comments of the Bella Coola on his own customs. Many have been to Victoria or Vancouver, and they feel that the contrasts of wealth observable in such big cities are atrocious; they ask how this is compatible with Christianity. They feel that it is unnatural for a man not to receive support from his cousins of all degrees; that the hoarding of wealth for the mere gratification of personal desires is selfish; that the selling of land is extraordinary; and that failure to ascribe every incident to supernatural causes is sacrilegious. These differences of viewpoint go as many matters explain the first impression of strangeness. A careful investigator comes to realize that he is among a people who fundamentally differ but slightly from his companions, though outwardly they have little in common. With respect to love, ambition, personal affection, sense of humour, pride, intelligence, even humour and vanity, the Bella Coola are essentially similar to ourselves. Unfortunately, these characteristics are expressed in ways unintelligible and often repellent to the casual traveller. If he will only look beneath the surface, he will find a people who are neither saints nor sinners, but essentially human, with the faults and follies as well as the elements of strength and wisdom which comprise, as Kipling puts it, "Man in a world of men."

The coming of the white civilization has been cataclysmic to the Bella Coola. Within two generations they have been reduced to a mere handful; instead of living in scattered villages, roaming the mountains for game and fishing at will, they now dwell in a single settlement and the taking of animals and fish is subject to law; the introduction of metal tools and mechanical appliances has revolutionized their mode of life; new foods, new clothing, new furniture has altered their living conditions; fermented drink has presented a factor unknown

Jr Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1923
NEA Bellacoola NEA

SYMPATHETIC MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT AMONG THE BELLACOOLA

By HARLAN I. SMITH

MANY OF the Bellacoola Indians today believe in sympathetic magic and witchcraft, after over a hundred years of contact with white men. Most of them live within hearing of the bells of the mission church, and the government school. Not a few of the men take logging contracts; some of them build and operate motor boats; many of them join the fishing fleets of the salmon canneries; most of the women work in the canneries, and all deal at the white men's stores.

The Bellacoola lived at the heads of the long inlets half way up the Pacific Coast of Canada and in the tributary Bella Coola valley. Now, numbering perhaps two hundred and fifty, they, with the exception of a few families, are concentrated on one reservation at the mouth of the Bella Coola river. The Bella Coola valley has been called the Norway of Canada. This was where Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the first white man to cross Canada overland, reached the sea.

Aboriginally, the Bellacoola were of the North Pacific Coast culture of America, which is characterized by the extensive use of red cedar and sea products, particularly salmon, the making of graceful, sea-going canoes, each hewn from a single cedar, the erection of large rectangular houses made of cedar planks, with carved house posts and totem poles, lack of pottery, and expertness in carpenter work, carving, and painting. This culture belongs to the harshest area, but the Bellacoolas were nomadic to a certain extent. The art of the area was that best known from the paintings and carvings of the totem poles, largely of conventionalized animal forms. The life centred around a very highly developed social organization, an extensive and powerful financial system, and property rights to names, rituals and honors. The Bellacoola language is one of the Salish linguistic stock. They

S. Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1925
NEB Bellacoola NEB

are apparently more recent comers to the coast than their neighbors and have not fully adopted this coast culture.

The following examples of sympathetic magic and witchcraft, collected during 1920 to 1923 among the Bellacoola, illustrate the extent of their belief in this direction.

Most of this information was given me by the late Captain Schooner, born about 1848, and Joshua Moody, born about 1868, both apparently full-blood Bellacoola Indians. Neither of these spoke English and both gave me the data in Chinook jargon, which I have endeavored to interpret and arrange in logical order, but have tried to render in as nearly as possible the Indian mode of thought, feeling and expression. Schooner was a pagan gentleman. Joshua has great knowledge of plants and animals, and is a Bellacoola scientist, but his great ambition and jealousy, combined with his disloyalty in giving up his own people's customs and adopting a very thin veneer of Christianity, color his statements relating to beliefs, although his plant and animal data have always withstood even examination and comparison with the data supplied by other Indians. Alec Davis and Mrs. Willie Mack told of the toad. They do not talk English and spoke to me in Chinook jargon. Only the accounts about the grizzly bear skin and the bracelet of beaver skin, which were given me by Mrs. Stonelger, were told in English.

The material was not given as accounts of magic or witchcraft, but rather as part of the data regarding the properties of plants and animals of which I was endeavoring to collect as complete information as possible.

Joshua, who is even younger than Captain Schooner, remembers the time when Mr. John Clayton was the only white man living in the Bella Coola valley, and when they saw only one other white man every year or two. Consequently these men remember the old Bellacoola beliefs before they were much, if at all, affected by European ideas.

It will be noticed that magic among the Bellacoola is considered of use both for beneficial and injurious purposes, and that the materials giving effect to it are of both plant and animal origin.

4: Smith R-5 (1920-1923) 1923
NRS Bellacoola NRS
Carrier NRT

ENTOMOLOGY AMONG THE BELLACOOLA AND CARRIER INDIANS

By HARLAN I. SMITH

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THE Bellacoola Indians live in the Norway of Canada, about midway of the Pacific Coast, where Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the first white man to cross Canada, reached the sea; that is, about half way between Vancouver and Prince Rupert. Their country is around the head of the fiords about sixty miles in from or east of Ocean Falls and the usual route of the steamers up and down the coast. This inland passage is with few exceptions protected by the outer fringe of islands. The Bellacoola language

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is one of the Salish linguistic stock. The people are of the typical North Pacific Coast culture, characterized by the extensive use of red cedar and its products, especially salmon, huge houses of split cedar planks with carved house posts, and totem poles, and immense seagoing canoes dug out of cedar. They were expert carpenters and had a peculiar art, especially in painting and carving, largely of conventionalized animal forms—a valuable contribution to the art of the world. This art may become of great financial value to the manufacturers of this country as well as a magnet capable of exploitation to bring in tourists with money from foreign lands. These Indians had a very highly developed social organization, many dramas and rituals, and a complex financial system popularly known as the potlatch.

C 101 [134]

The Carrier Indians of Ulkatcho, on the other hand, live in the high plateau of the semi-arid region, perhaps 75 miles northeast of the Bellacoola. They differ from the Bellacoola in language, appearance, and culture perhaps as much as do the Turks from the English. They had a less realistic art, which was largely geometric and pictographic, highly conventionalized and symbolic. Their social organization and financial system also were less highly developed.

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From time to time during 1920-1922 inclusive, I have secured from both these peoples data about their use of materials. Part

6:Boas E-5 (1884-ca. 1890)1892
NEB Bellacoola NEB

[104] the shore of the Pacific in 1778. As a result of this intercommunication between the Bilqula and Tlimuk it is found that houses essentially similar to those of the Coast Indians in mode of construction and arrangement, though smaller and less skilfully built, occur far inland on the upper waters of the Salmon and Blackwater Rivers; while, on the other hand, the practical identity of some portion of the mythology of the Bilqula with that of the Tlimuk of the interior is a clear instance of reciprocal influence.

The second part of the report will be found to contain the most complete series that has obtained of anthropological measurements relating to the tribes of the North-West Coast, with a discussion by the author of the data which these afford, in which several points of value are brought out and important suggestions are made for further inquiry. In this connexion this Board has sanctioned that the researches are much indebted to the courteous and enlightened liberality of Major J. W. Powell, Director of the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology, who has permitted Dr. Boas to incorporate with the measurements obtained in British Columbia those made by him in Washington and Oregon under Major Powell's direction. It has thus been possible for Dr. Boas to give to his treatment of this subject a comprehensiveness otherwise, which could not otherwise have been obtained, by enlarging the scope of his discussion so as to include the more or less intimately related tribes of the Pacific States with those of the Province of British Columbia itself.

Third Report on the Indians of British Columbia.
By Dr. Franz Boas.

[104] The following alphabet has been used in the report:—
The vowels have their continental sounds, namely: a, as in father; e, like a in mate; i, as in machine; o, as in note; u, as in rule.
In addition the following are used: ä, ö, as in German; ü more in front; ə more in flower (Lepsius's ə).
Among the consonants the following additional letters have been used: g', a very guttural g, similar to gr; k', a very guttural k, similar to kr; q, the German ch in buch; q', the German ch in ich; x, between q and k; x' result to above; g, as th in this; ł, an explosive l; dj, a palatal t, pronounced with the back of the tongue (Boas-Sproat).

THE BILQULA.

[105] The Bilqula, who are generally called Bella Coola, are the most northern tribe belonging to the Salish family. They are separated from the other speaking tribal languages by the Dakinagh (of the Tlimuk stock) in the interior, and on the coast by the Kwakiutl. Their language is considered somewhat more closely related to the dialects of the Coast Salish than to those of the tribes of the interior. A number of terms referring to the sea and the animals on the coast is found in Bilqula and in the dialects of the Gulf of Georgia; so that we may safely assume that the two groups of tribes were at one time closely united, and that the Bilqula were differentiated from this group. They inhabit the coasts of Dean Canal, Burke Inlet, as [107] well as the land surrounding the sixth report of the committee, and extend far up Bella Coola River. Since the end of last century they

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I.

The Bella Coola are a small tribe inhabiting the coasts of Dean Inlet and Bentinck Arm, two long and narrow fiords situated in about latitude 52° north, in British Columbia. Their habitat extends along Bella Coola River, which empties into North Bentinck Arm. The name "Bella Coola" is a corruption of the word "Bilxula," by which name the tribe is known to the Kwakiutl. There is no term in their own language embracing all the tribes speaking the Bella Coola language. It seems that at a former time the tribe was quite populous; but, owing to various epidemics and the introduction of other diseases, its numbers have dwindled down, so that at the present time it has been reduced to only a few hundred souls. The language spoken by the tribe belongs to the Salishan family, more particularly to the group of dialects spoken along the coasts of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. The great similarity between the Bella Coola and the other Coast-Salishan dialects leads me to assume that at one time the tribes speaking these dialects inhabited contiguous areas. At the present time the Bella Coola are separated from other tribes speaking Salishan languages by a considerable stretch of country, which is inhabited by tribes of Athapascan and Kwakiutl lineage. Vocabulary and grammar have been highly modified, particularly by an extensive elision of vowels. The relation of their language to the other dialects of the Coast Salish is similar to that of the Tillamook, another language belonging to the Salishan family, which is spoken on the coast of Oregon, in an area separated from the rest of the Salishan territory by the district inhabited by the Chinook.

Physically the Bella Coola bear evidence of long-continued contact with the northern Coast tribes, and also with the Athapascan tribes of the interior. Evidently intermarriages have been quite frequent, so much so that their present physical appearance differs considerably from that of the southern Salishan tribes, of whom they form a branch. The same is true in regard to their customs and beliefs, which differ fundamentally from those of the southern Salishan tribes.

In the present paper I shall describe the mythology of the Bella Coola, and discuss its development.

II.

Our previous knowledge of the mythology of this tribe is based on studies made by Adrian Jacobsen, Filip Jacobsen, Gosken, and the writer. In 1886 I published a few brief notes on their traditions.[1]

[1] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, 1886, p. 226.